

# THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

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## PRACTICAL.

### VOCAL EXECUTION.

HAVING discussed at some length the radical properties of style, in vocal music, it might be expected of us to proceed with practical illustrations. This may hereafter be done, at the proper time, under the head of Adaptation. In the mean while, other properties besides those which are radical, must receive some share of our attention. We have yet to speak of what have been termed the

GRACES OR EMBELLISHMENTS. To say that this class of properties has nothing to do with devotional song, is the same as to affirm, that the preacher who addresses us, may without impropriety be perfectly reckless, as to all the ornaments of style and the graces of delivery. This of course would be too broad an assertion. Great plainness of speech and simplicity of manner are indeed indispensable. The messenger of peace from on high, must not seek to dazzle us with his tropes and figures, and amuse us with his studied attitudes, while we are hungry for the bread of life. He must be beyond every suspicion of such a design, if we are to be edified by his communications. Every thing like affectation would here be intolerable. The speech-makers at a popular assembly, convened for secular purposes will claim some license in these respects; but not so with the ambassador from the court of heaven. The solemnity of his messages, but ill accords with the studious cultivation of those lighter embellishments.

But on the other hand, there is no demand for vulgarity or boorishness. It is not for us to affirm which of the two extremes is worst. Either would be out of place in the educated speaker. There is no need of his offending against the laws of chaste simplicity. Affectation of manner on either hand, is to be carefully avoided.

The case with the vocalist is precisely similar. So far as the musical embellishments are concerned, he must regard them as the figures and attitudes of the orator. While giving secular concerts for his own pecuniary emolument, yet ostensibly for the improvement and gratification of the public at large, he will of course be governed in some measure by other principles. He will draw as largely from the habits and traits of dramatic representation as he chooses; and in the same proportion, perhaps, call forth the vociferations of applause, and the clappings and stampings of a city auditory. But this kind of influence, in the house of God, would be high-handed presumption and awful mockery. Let it not once be named in connection with devotional song. Not a few of the choirs of this land, it is to be feared, are verging towards this extreme, at the present time; and we have some fears that this evil is rapidly increasing: but in the majority of cases, there is too little cultivation for the commission of such an error. The art is either wholly neglected, or indifferently understood: and the singers have too much trouble with the mere elementary properties of style, to allow of a single thought with regard to such as are merely ornamental.

But we will suppose that a choir have so far mastered the radical properties as to be in a fit condition to attend to other matters of less interest. What course shall they pursue? Shall we introduce them at once to the shake, the turn, the beat, the slide, the spring, the mordent and the whole catalogue of graces? These would furnish occupation for the rest of their lives. The professional singer may attend to them, and *explain* them to others; but how very few of this catalogue, can be safely recommended, for adoption in sacred music! Pupils will naturally aim at embellishments of some kind, and will always be acquiring awkward habits through the influence of unconscious imitation. The popular style of secular music, furnishes abundant examples of this nature. Even the professional performers who visit us from a foreign clime, find it convenient, to pay court in this respect to our national rusticities of taste.

The first great labor of the teacher in polishing the style of his pupils, then, is that of pruning redundancies: the second is, to furnish oral illustrations, of what may properly be imitated. What he would inculcate in others with success, he must constantly practice in his own proper person. In the third place, he must propose nothing for imitation, either directly or indirectly, which in the circumstances of the case, will prove too difficult in practice for his pupils.

He must adapt himself in this respect, to their state of progress, just as the popular speaker adapts himself to the character and condition of his hearers. All this will in due time, effect much towards the accomplishment of his desired object; and in many given cases may be about all that he can do.

We here take it for granted, however, that the teacher's own style is correct, and his notions of taste well founded and judicious. His own habits and views will have been acquired, not chiefly from books which are redundant on the one extreme and barren on the other, nor principally from studious imitations of a single living model, but from those various sources combined. Let him analyze his own style, and see what in it is essential, accidental, ornamental or redundant; and let him exhibit such of these as he wishes to be better understood and imitated by his pupils. In the present unsettled state of the art, it seems difficult to give him more specific directions than these.

We have said that his chief labor for a while, will be that of removing redundancies. But his pruning must not be too close. The mouthings and dental tones, and strong emphases of a fashionable style must not be so far discarded as to lead to opposite errors. Some slight reference must also be had to popular feelings and predilections. In this respect we must in the good sense of the phrase, "become all things to all men," that all may be benefited, and interested in what is sung to them.

A single example may here serve to illustrate our meaning. Singers who have a certain specific habit of *gliding* from one interval to another, by means of small intermediate notes which are not written, are said in modern parlance, to have a good *portamento*. This is thought to be such a high attainment, that every aspirant for vocal honors, must endeavor to acquire it. Those who have feeble voices will take great pains to have the little notes heard, and perchance will even dignify them with a strong accent. A person whose voice is rough and unmanageable must add to the length of the little notes, or not hit them at all; and the foreigner who has come among us to sing for his bread, will so far pay court to our dullness of ear and slowness of apprehension, as virtually to convert the little notes into large ones, and throw the principal notes of the melody quite into the back ground. After all a really good portamento has much influence in heightening the pathos of a certain class of melodies. Rude imitations of it will prevail unless the thing itself is attained. The teacher has here a difficult task

to perform. Let him lay down his principles and bring forward his examples: yet let the supposed little notes in question, be so shortened as to time, and diminished in intensity as, simply to give interest to the style without attracting special observation. On this principle, the first line of the old tune Hotham might be rendered thus:



Would the little notes be still thought too prominent? Then let another hook be added, and the notes further reduced in volume. But if the public ear has no prejudice to the contrary, and the vocalist is not equal to such niceties; then, instead of adding a fifth hook let one be taken off. A further removal of hooks would convert the characters into *after-notes* and render them worse than useless incumbrances. Such for the most part we find them at the present moment among the thousand luckless imitators of a fashionable style. Could any thing be more disagreeable?

We shall only add in this connection, that the proper place for musical graces, is chiefly in solos and not in choral harmonies. Where there is the least pretensions to style, this is a principle never to be forgotten.

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### VOICING THE PIPES.

Among organ builders, voicing the pipes is an operation well understood. If any pipe is too loud for the rest of its fellows, it must be softened: if it speaks too moderately, it must be augmented in volume. If its tone is too harsh or too feeble, too close or too open, still the workman casts about him, for a remedy; and he will sooner throw the pipe away than suffer it to remain where it would not perform its office in a proper manner. It is not enough that the pipes are put in tune. They must be made to speak with ease and propriety; to speak consentaneously. Great varieties of tone are indeed required: but there must be an exact classification, and each variety must be put by itself. The open diapason, for instance, must be separated from the stop-diapason; the dulciana from the flute, the principal from the trumpet; and the various

classes must be furnished with specific machinery, so as to be acted upon at the pleasure of the performer. The latter it is true, may combine these different classes, to any extent he chooses, and even use them all at the same given moment, if the occasion demands. Nevertheless, the process of voicing loses nothing of its importance from this consideration; and the instrument owes to it, most of its richness and variety of harmonic power. Shall such pains be taken with insensible wood, and silver, and brass, and lead, and next to none with the living subjects who are to sing with heart and mind, the sweet themes of the gospel of salvation? The human voice is susceptible of endless varieties, and nothing of man's invention is to be compared with it, in regard to its susceptibilities of cultivation.

Voicing the pipes in an organ is a trade by itself, which requires much practical skill and delicacy of discrimination. The art of voicing, with respect to the human subject, should seem to require equal skill and delicacy. True, in the latter case nature has given us more flexible materials, than in the former: but then there is another circumstance which more than counterbalances this advantage. If pipes are themselves inactive except at the touch of the player; they are at least quite passive about the circumstance of being voiced. The builder may operate on them as long as he chooses without exciting their impatience. Not so with the pupils of the vocalist: they are very restive under this species of discipline; and great address is required, in the teacher, to secure their patient attention. This fact however will not excuse him in the neglect of his duty. Imagine before you a choir of from fifty to a hundred members, who have had but little cultivation. If they were so many separate pipes of an organ, we should say of one that it was too loud, of another, that it was too feeble, of a third, that it was too open, of a fourth, that it was too close or nasal, of a fifth, that it was cracked, &c., while here and there we should find one so incorrigible as necessarily to be thrown aside. And then there would be one description of voices resembling the diapason, another resembling the flute, a third resembling the reed &c., which should be separated and classified. Here comes the rub. If the several pipes of an organ were to be vain of their own powers, jealous of their privileges, tenacious of their position, quality and powers: if they were to set up for separate interests: and especially if each one were ready to wince at every touch, and cry out against the builder, as if he were committing an assault and

battery upon them—it is easy to see, that in such a case his work would never be accomplished. The instrument would of course be ruined.

A choir of singers under the direction of a skilful, judicious, good-tempered, courteous teacher, should assume the docility of little children. Those who are to lead in the praises of God should learn to be humble, meek, affectionate, and diligent in their attention to points of discipline, moral, physical, and scientific. How much this would lessen the task of a teacher. No one should set up for the highest place. All should be passive with regard to the will of the teacher; yet active in reference to the work of cultivation. The teacher should be allowed to seat them as often as he finds it necessary,—and to do any thing that may further the progress of improvement. If there is here and there a voice decidedly bad, that will not be improved, let it be put aside among the congregation without any hard words or feelings on the occasion. If singers would only feel right and act under the genuine influence of Christian principle, all this and much more could be done. We trust that such a spirit is beginning to prevail: and we anticipate from it, the happiest results.

We once knew a choir which seemed fully to answer this description. Most of them were professors of religion. They would meet for improvement, through a religious sense of obligation. Amusement, and tasteful gratification, were subordinate considerations. One prominent feeling seemed to animate the members, that of qualifying themselves to sing to real edification, the praises of the living God. They were of one mind, united, affectionate to each other and to their occasional teacher. The latter could easily effect any reasonable measure or do any proper thing at any time on the spur of the moment. All were anxious to make improvement; and desirous to avail themselves of individual criticism. The rapidity of their progress is easily imagined. Their religious enjoyment was more than we shall undertake to describe.

The subject here brought forward is earnestly recommended to the public attention; and we hope that teachers and choirs will lay it to heart. Industrious, individual cultivation under the full and proper influence of religious considerations. This is the thing required.

But there is still before us another point of illustration. There is a great difference in the skill of workmen. Some for instance, will give the nasal quality to the pipes, and others will make them real screamers. There is in this respect all the difference that can be imagined. The

best workmen should therefore be procured. Poor ones may be hired at a *cheaper* rate, but what will be the character of their work? So the vocalist who attempts to teach the art to others, should be himself a man of skill. At present there is a great want of such men; and if they were to be found, the churches, perhaps, would be but ill prepared to sustain them. But the importance of this subject demands that some sacrifice should be made; and we hope that our younger brethren will seek and acquire in time, the needed information.

If we were to be allowed to speak yet more freely, we should advert upon two very prominent extremes, which are about equally distant from the proper medium. An eastern class of teachers, not the best of their order, come among us with a tone which has too much resemblance to the howling of wild animals, for any specific purposes of expression. A western class on the contrary, with closed teeth and shut mouth, afflict us continually with the idea of an apolypus of the nose. These are more intolerable than either the rough German guttural or the rude Italian scream. So far as church music is concerned, there should be a constant reference to common sense principles. A sober medium should be industriously preserved.

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### CHARACTER OF LESSONS.

THAT lessons in practical music, whether vocal or instrumental, should as far as possible, be regularly progressive, is a principle, the soundness of which will never be questioned. Practise may often be at war with theory, but the principle will remain unshaken. To our own mind, a question arises scarcely less in importance, touching the *character of the materials* of which lessons are constructed. Early musical impressions are not easily effaced; and they ought therefore, to be of the right character. If the musical specimens first put into the hands of the young executant are frivolous, insipid and ungrammatical, he is by this means just prepared for the run of coarse, common place songs, attached to doggrels in poetry, which are at the present time inundating the country. On the other hand the style of the lessons should not be too far above the perception of the pupil. His taste should be gratified, and led gradually onward at a pleasant rate.



Our primary English schools are acting on the right principle in regard to reading books. What care is taken in the selection of extracts. These are no longer taken from plays and novels of a light character. Recourse is had to the finest specimens of prose and poetry, and those which are best adapted to the mind and morals of the young pupils. We see nothing of the kind in lessons for instrumental music; and if we except our books of psalmody, these is little to be commended in this respect, in the whole circle of practical music. This may be one cause why there is so little discrimination among us, in reference to pieces at the present time. Perhaps this is putting cause for effect: but at any rate such an improvement in the character of lessons, as is now proposed, would lead to the happiest results upon the rising community of practical musicians. Let the experiment be tried. Who will begin?

## THEORETICAL.

### HARMONY.

Since it is by a practical acquaintance with chords and inversions and successions of chords, that the student is to gain an intimate knowledge of harmony, we cannot content ourselves with having presented our readers with a single analysed specimen. The following is less simple in its structure, than the one which appeared in our last number:

#### OLD HUNDRED.

a   a c   b g   b c   a a   a a

5 6   5



c b f a e b c a e g f d

a a a b c a f e a

5 8 7

Let the reader as in the former example, first make out an analysis of chords for himself, after which he may examine what is here presented.

1. At the references marked *a*, the chords are all of the major tonic direct, though they embrace considerable variety as to the positions of the intervals, in the upper parts, and as to their distance from the base or root of the chord. See for instance the fourth measure.

2. Five instances occur at the references *b*, of the *minor* tonic direct, exhibiting but little variety as to the position of intervals. In the first of these chords, the root is doubled by the octave in the treble; in the second, the interval of the third is doubled by the air and tenor in octaves to each other, in the third instance, the interval of the third occurs in the first and second trebles which are unisons, while the tenor strikes successively the fifth and third, that an *improper* succession may be avoided. In the fourth instance, the two trebles again occupy the interval of the third while the tenor sustains that of the fifth; and in the last instance, while the second treble sustains the interval of the fifth, the air and tenor, both occupy that of the third, at the distance of an octave from each other, precisely as in the second instance.

3. The chords marked *c*, are of the dominant direct in various positions without the fundamental seventh. The chord marked *d* is the dominant carrying its fundamental seventh as heard in the second treble. A figure 7 is therefore placed beneath the base note, to distinguish this

chord from those of the same root just described. The chord marked *e*, commences with the octave of the root doubled in the tenor, while the octave immediately descends one degree into the fundamental seventh. The figures 8, 7, are therefore the proper cyphers to be applied.

4. The three chords marked *f*, are instances of the sub-dominant direct without its added sixth. The positions are but little varied except that in the second chord: the fifth occurs in the tenor.

5. The two chords marked *g*, are first inversions of the major tonic. In the one instance, the root is found in the tenor, while the trebles carry in unison, the original fifth of the root, as third to the present base note; in the other instance the interval last mentioned is sustained only by the second treble, while the root occurs in the air and tenor. No other inversions occur in the tune.

6. The small notes found in the above example, are usually expressed (though perhaps without much propriety) in large characters. In this case however, we should indicate their nature by corresponding figures in thorough base. The first one would require a 7 as at the reference *e*, for reasons already explained. The others belong to classes of accidental chords not yet described.

7. Most of the chords in the tonic are fundamental concords direct, embracing the third fifth and octave in various positions. As such chords are the most easily managed and appreciated by the untutored multitude; it has been thought suitable in time past, to employ them almost exclusively in the department of parochial *psalmody*. The employment of instruments, which strike intervals with mechanic accuracy, has led to the free use of imperfect chords, inversions, and fundamental discords. Harmony by this means has been greatly enriched. Still in the publication or selection of tunes for devotional purposes, it is safer to err in the former extreme, than in the latter. The public ear still requires plain, simple harmony.

8. In the above analysis we find an occasional instance of the tonic *minor*, while the whole tone is reckoned in the *major* scale. This is a species of license which occurs somewhat more frequently in ancient music than in modern. The major tonic is also allowed the same privilege with respect to tunes in the minor scale. A single chord thus introduced, is not considered as changing the whole order of the scales because the regular progression is immediately resumed. When we come to speak definitely, of modulations, this matter will be quite manifest.

9. Under the second head of these observations we alluded to the necessity of avoiding improper progressions. Rules for the succession, of chords will be furnished in their appropriate place. Meanwhile, let the reader, at his leisure pursue the analysis of chords, after the method we have exhibited. The habit will be of great importance to his future progress, in the art.

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### ANCIENT CHANT.

Fragments of the melody which was used in the days of Ambrose and Gregory, are still extant among the specimens of ancient music. The art has so changed with the lapse of centuries, that the fragments have scarcely any other interest than that of a scientific nature. A few of them that have lately been published at the east with modern harmony, are seized upon with some avidity by the uninitiated. It should be understood, however, that all the *musical* interest now attached to them has been furnished by the *modern* composer. It seems a pity to interfere about such tasteful notions of antiquity—but probably, the specimens in their present dress, have just about as much resemblance to the ancient originals, as modern relics do to the cross of St. Peter—all being alike made of wood. The publishers could not have had the least idea of these pieces passing for relics; for they are men of sense and principle.

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### MISCELLANEOUS.

*PSALMODIA, or the Pastor's plea for sacred Psalmody: by F. Freeman, Pastor of St. David's church, Manayunk. J. Whitman, Philadelphia, and Ezra Collier, New-York, 1836. p. p. 144, 12 mo.*

WE greet this little volume with peculiar pleasure, as furnished by the pen of a worthy clergyman. This we would fondly hope, is the commencement of a better era in the American churches. Who shall become the successful advocate of true devotional praise while ministers treat the subject with manifest indifference? How shall a revolu-

tion in favor of the intelligent performance and spiritual influences of church music become consummated, while the great majority of those who are our constituted guides, both as to the external and internal economy of religious worship: have all unconsciously become the greatest practical hindrances to genuine improvement? The thing cannot be. Unless the clergy will awake to some measure of intelligent activity, in this field of effort, very little will ultimately be effected. Others will continue almost to labor in vain, and spend their strength for nought.

This principle is not peculiar to the interests to which we here refer. It is as broad in its application, as the whole field of Christian effort. What can a few laymen do in the cause of tracts, of bible distribution, of Sunday-schools, of general or specific benevolence, unless their pastor lends his countenance and encouragement? At least he must stand out of their way. The car of improvement cannot be rolled over him. The least to be expected from him is not to offer any hindrance to the cause. And what would become of prayer-meetings and meetings for religious conference, if our pastors were to oppose them. As things now are, they are ordinarily sustained with difficulty: and if the pastor were to oppose them, they would die of course.

But the difficulties in the way of reform in devotional singing, are many and peculiar. A pastor's influence, if we may be allowed to judge in the case, is not less indispensable here, than in other meetings of a religious nature. This we most firmly believe; and certainly we have had abundant opportunities for observation. For many years past we have been oppressed with the increasing conviction that little will ever be done towards eradicating the countless abuses which have crept into this portion of the services of the church till evangelical Christian ministers will undertake to inform themselves and be prepared to put forth intelligent exertions in favor of the right influences. Some are already persuaded of the great importance of the subject: and others, without special information are willing to take this thing for granted. But what can they do? How shall they act? When shall they obtain competent teachers and persuade the churches to patronize them? What style shall they encourage? Among jarring interests, and feuds and quarrels on the one hand, and mutual combinations in favor of decided influences of secularity and irreligion on the other, where shall they begin to apply appropriate exertions? These momentous questions are constantly recurring, especially in the presbyterian and congregational churches, and doubtless in many cases it requires a

wise man to answer them. Still something *must be done*. These difficulties will but increase amid the influence of clerical neglect or mismanagement.

Owing to the peculiar discipline and the habits of Episcopaleans the ministers of that denomination, of which our author is one, find themselves less frequently embarrassed, it may be, than are many of their brethren of sister denominations. The latter, it must be confessed are often placed in predicaments sufficiently embarrassing to puzzle the best informed in relation to such subjects : and yet there is scarcely among the whole fraternity, we fear, enough of sound musical training, to enable them to adopt and pursue in all cases the right course, even when they are duly convinced that effort is needed. The work before us will, perhaps, do little to aid them in their perplexity : yet it may do something. It manifests a becoming interest in the subject ; and sets an example of fair, temperate discussion ; and what is still better, it brings out some long neglected points with a good degree of earnestness, and urges them upon the public attention, with intelligence and christian zeal. This feature of the work especially has delighted us : and if in the dryer details of the volume, there are occasional mistakes of a scientific character, we are not disposed to be very severe in our censures. We are glad that the author has come before the public ; and are persuaded that his little book coming from such a source as it does, will be of service to the cause.

The body of the work, it seems, was framed from a sermon originally prepared by the author to the people of his charge. In dividing the discourse into chapters and sections some logical difficulties would naturally arise, and some stiffness in the arrangement would be unavoidable : but if some of the earlier divisions of the subject appear a little barren of interest, we would advise the reader to hold on, in his perusal : he will find something ahead which is more interesting and more to the purpose.

Part first, furnishes us with a pleasant flow of common place remarks as an introduction. Part second, consisting of three short chapters, treats of the *duty* of singing God's praise. The propositions are : 1st, God requires our worship. 2nd. Music is of divine institution, and 3rd. [The institution is] continued in the New Testament [dispensation. Perhaps Episcopaleans do not need so much teaching and urging as some other denominations do, in regard to this matter. The argument is made out in the usual way, but not with sufficient point, and some im-

portant items are wanting. A few thoughts which occur towards the close of the volume, might have here been inserted with effect. The idea that the language of our public songs must be the genuine language of our hearts—that there must be honest commitment of soul and deep spirituality—that the exercise of singing God's praises requires previous prayerful preparation; and that in the absence of all this, there will be nothing better than empty formality, or solemn mockery, or profaneness:—ideas like these which may be fairly gleaned from the subsequent pages of the volume, might here have told with greater emphasis. Men—especially good men—do not like to be accused of mocking the most High in their religious services: and if this charge can be distinctly made out, and substantiated before them, there is some hope in their case. Still if they will read the entire volume—if the neglectors of this duty will but read a small number of very small, loosely printed pages, before laying the book aside, they will discover sufficient matter for personal conviction. Presbyterians have often declaimed against the formalism of an Episcopalean liturgy: a little change handed back by Episcopaleans ever so inadvertently may be of use. We rejoice to see it; and trust it will do good.

*(To be continued.)*

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### A NEW WORK.

The music contained in the present number is taken by permission from a volume of anthems chorusses, motets, trios, duos, solos, &c. now in a train of publication by the New York Musical Academy, under the editorial charge of the conductor of this Magazine. The work will appear in occasional numbers, containing selections by the musical committee. It is intended to occupy a middle place between the psalmodic and the oratorial style; and no reasonable pains will be spared in supplying schools and musical societies, with specimens that may be deemed appropriate and interesting.

There has hitherto been a confessed barrenness of materials suited to this department. Anthems such as have been furnished by illiterate composers, are certainly unsatisfactory; while those which have been composed for the Episcopal and Catholic Churches of Great Britain

by the ablest masters, seem with all their elaborate contrivances, to be heavy, dull, and deficient in appropriate sentiment, at least to unsophisticated ears. As *scientific* specimens, many of them will continue to be venerated and admired: but it is needless to say, that for the most part they have very little in them which can kindle the devotion of an American auditory.

Such a work as is now commenced ought by all means to be adapted to the real wants of the community. The chasm the Academy are thus endeavoring to fill, is too wide to be neglected. Valuable foreign materials are on hand, and more will be received. Original pieces such as may be thought to have sufficient merit, will also find a place in the selection. The first number consisting of thirty-two quarto pages is nearly ready for distribution.

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Let the conscientious be sure to read the following article with strict attention.

For the Musical Magazine.

MR. EDITOR:—In the last two numbers of the Magazine answers to a question proposed some time since have appeared, which were, I doubt not, highly satisfactory to your readers. The article in the last number more fully covers the subject of the inquiry, and to some points in that I beg leave to direct a few thoughts.

The great consideration which seems to have prompted that question would appear to be that suggested by "Jeduthan," viz. the need of direct preparation on the part of singers to bring their minds to a suitable frame for the proper performance of their solemn work. Most justly does he intimate the inquiry,—Are *they* prepared at all times, unlike most other Christians, to take the name of the Lord upon their lips in sacred, lofty, praise? can they, *without a moment's previous thought* on the special subjects before them, utter the mournings of penitence and pour out the heart-broken acknowledgment of guilty transgression? must they be ready, with no notice of their duty, to speak one to another, and to saints and sinners around them, of the mercies of God, the sufferings of the Savior, the terrors of the Judgment, or the glories of the eternal world? O, sir, under the weight of themes such as these, we might almost suppose that even an angel's tongue would falter, and a seraph's hand pause and tremble



before it touched the waiting string; for doubtless the solemnity and grandeur of these subjects are more than a mere indistinct notion in their minds, as it is to be feared they are in too many of ours.

But we—sinful, earthly, feeble minded creatures—are to feel none of this awe and holy delicacy, if I may so speak: we can come forth from the crowded Sabbath School, or the noisy, profane streets, and taking our places, utter from the heart at once, it should seem, strains which might falter upon angels' lips, and seize with unhesitating hand the harp which a seraph touches with the deepest prostration of soul.

Plainly, Mr. Editor, in my humble estimation, this kind of service is nothing less essentially, than offering for sacrifice "the blind, the lame, and the sick," and it is endeavoring to worship God *dispensing with* the preparation of the heart, and the answer of the tongue, which are to be sought for from Him.

His children should avoid the necessity which compels them to the commission of this outrage, and which thereby engenders in their minds an undue familiarity with the holiest themes:—yes, even a desecration of them. I must confess, and I would speak it feelingly, that a thousand times my heart has told me when engaged in this kind of worship, and after it was over, that *that offering could not* be acceptable to the pure and heart-searching God. And often has it appeared that if the rest of the congregation could be effected in His sight by the manner of spirit with which the choir led them in their praises, then were the whole congregation gravely engaged in a unanimous exercise of mockery on the blessed Sabbath!—and all from the want of a little consideration as to the *nature* and *object* of the duties which properly belong to the choir, and of the obvious necessity of preparing for those duties as well as for others connected with the services of the sanctuary and the holy day. But more on this subject at a future time.

Yours,

A VOCALIST.

Who can read such remarks as the above and not be ready to plead guilty! Whether he be a singer or not, he will find matter for self-reproach. Reader, what shall be done? What will *you* do? Confess your fault and then go onward in your former course? No doubt at all—if you have read the discussion of this subject, you are a *convicted* man. If you have refused to read and think on this subject—still there is delinquency—sinful, ungrateful delinquency.—What will you do? No excuses in palliation of such a sin as this.—What will you do?